(c) the reasons for closing the Centre daily at 5.30 p.m. in Nagpur; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to see that the NIC machines in Nagpur are kept active till late night or for 24 hours for easy access to NICNET?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) The National Informatics Centre (NIC) had established a Satellite based computer—communication network (NICNET) covering the National Capital Delhi, State/UT Capitals and the district centres, functioning since 1987. Using this network, NIC has been providing to the State and the Central government offices, computerised socioeconomic information, project monitoring, electronic mail, international detabase access etc, NIC has introduced the Infohighway as an overaly network of the NICNET system to provide high speed connectivity to the users, Through this system speeds upto 2.2. mbps can be achieved. This facilitates a variety of latest applications like Videoconferencing, interactive multimedia detabase access, national and international E-mail services and full-fledged Internet access, Using this computer-communiction technology NIC has brought case law information, latest medical information, patents information, land records and variety of other informatics services to every part of the country. These were based on the latest computer and communication technologies that are available in the world today.

(c) NIC Computer Centres at districts are located at District Collector's Office. These district centres provide services to the district and the state government offices and follow the office timings of district administrations, Further, the power supply is not available after the office hours as it is shut off due to fire hazards, Due to this, NIC district centres are not able to function beyond a few hours after the closing time.

(d) NIC, recognising the need of the extended usage, is now taking steps to operate high speed computer communication facility on a 24 hours basis at various parts of the country, It has already taken steps in some parts of the country depending upon the usage and requirements, NIC are taking steps to operate the computer communication system in Nagpur by making arrangements for 12 hours power supply in the first instance depending on the actual requirement and usage.

Shortage of coal in the country

1017. SHRI JALALUDIN ANSARI:
SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is an acute shortage of coal in the country; and

(b) if so, the demand and supply position of coal and the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) For the year 1995-96, the Planning Commission has assessed the overall demand of coal of different sectors at 288.00 million tonnes. The production programme of the coal companies in India is geared to meat this level of demand.

However, during 1995-96, coal production has been affected by two illegal strickes in Singareni Collieries Company Limited instigated by extremist elements. Production was also affected due to drowing of mines in the eastern parts of the country as a result of unprecedented rainfall. Despite this, coal production in Coal India Limited (CIL) and Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) during the period April, 1995-February, 1996 has shown an increase of 6.0% over similar period last year, The total despatches of coal from CIL and SCCL during the period April, 1995—February, 1996 have shown an increase 7.6% over

similar period last year. Coal despatches to the power sector have been maintained to the desired extent. It was only because of high priority being accorded to the power sector there has been some shortfalls in despatches of coal to the other sectors.

Coal companies are striving to maximise coal production and despatches for meeting the entire demand of coal as per projections made by the Planning Commission, within the constraints of production and its transportation. Coal can also be freely imported and the consumers can supplement their supplies through imports. The option of captive mining is also now available for power and steel sectors. Coal from a number of collieries has been offered under LSS to supplement its supply.

Employment Opportunities for the Youth in Tribal Areas of Gujarat

1018. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering any special plan to create employment opportunities for the youth in the tribal areas of Surat, Bharuch, Valsad, Panchmahal and Dang districts of Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the scheme is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) to (c) There is no specific Centrally Sponsored Scheme under consideration to create employment opportunities for the youth in the tribal areas of Surat, Bharuch, Valsad, Panchmahal and Dang districts of Gujarat, However, preference is given to Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections of society in employment oriented programmes, such as, Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY), Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), Nehru Rozgar Yojana (NRY) and Prime Minister's Integrated Urban Poverty Eradication Programme (PMIUPEP).

Modernisation of Coal Industry

1019. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the objectives of the various modernisation measures taken in coal industry during the last two decades;

(b) the details of the public money invested therein;

(c) to what Extent the objectives set out have been achieved;

(d) whether qualitative increase in coal production has been achieved;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) The objective of the various modernisation measures taken in the coal industry have been one or a combination of the following—

(i) Increased production and productivity;

(ii) Improve safety; and

(iii) Conservation of coal resources.

(b) The capital investment in Coal India Limited (CIL) since 1975-76 upto 1994-95 has been Rs. 18027.61 crores. In Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL), the capital investment since 1974-75 till 1994-95 has been Rs. 2932. 43 crores.

(c) Some of the relevant achievements of CIL and SCCL are given below:

CIL

The annual coal production has increased from 78.99 million tonnes in 1974-75 to 223.07 million tonnes in 1994-95.